

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 248565 TOSEC 160074

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY FLASH

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV FLASH

S E C R E T STATE 248565 TOSEC 160074

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 10501 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DTD 20 OCT
QUOTE:

S E C R E T CAIRO 10501

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS EG

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 22 TRANSIT OF ISRAELI CARGO
THROUGH SUEZ CANAL

REF A. CAIRO 10482; B. STATE 248421 (TOSEC 160025)

1. IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT REFTEL B, WHICH I SAW AFTER
REFTEL A HAD BEEN SENT, I ASKED TO SEE FAHMY TO
CONVEY NECESSARY INFORMATION. I HAVE JUST COME
FROM A MEETING WITH HIM. WHEN I GAVE HIM THE
INFORMATION, HE GROANED. WHY WOULD THE ISRAELIS
HAVE TO CHOOSE A CARGO FROM SOUTH AFRICA? AS THEY
AND WE ARE AWARE, THERE ARE UN AND EVEN STRONGER
OAU EMBARGO PROCEDURES IN EFFECT AGAINST ANYTHING
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COMING FROM SOUTH AFRICA. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE

WHETHER TITLE TO A CARGO HAS ALREADY PASSED TO A NEW OWNER. IF THE ORIGIN IS SOUTH AFRICAN, IT IS EMBARGOED AND SUBJECT TO CONFISCATION. THE SCA AUTHORITIES HAVE ALREADY CONFISCATED A CARGO OF RHODESIAN ORIGIN.

2. AFFIRMING THAT ALL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR AN ISRAELI CARGO TO TRANSIT ON OCTOBER 22, FAHMY SAID HE COULD NOT ALSO ASK THAT CARGO OF SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN BE ALLOWED TO PASS THROUGH. THERE WILL BE ENOUGH OUTCRY AT HOME AND IN THE ARAB WORLD ABOUT AN ISRAELI CARGO TRANSITING; THIS WILL ONLY BE COMPOUNDED IF IT ALSO INVOLVES VIOLATION OF THE UN AND OAU RESOLUTIONS EMBARGOING OF SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN GOODS. HE HAD TO WARN US THAT THERE IS A "BIG RISK" IN TRYING TO USE THE NETA CARGO AS THE TEST VASE. THERE IS A "FIFTY-FIFTY" CHANCE THAT THE CARGO WILL BE SEIZED BECAUSE OF ITS SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN. HE COULD NOT INTERVENE IN THIS MATTER.

3. FAHMY EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT WE, WHO SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBARGO ISSUE, HAD NOT ADVISED THE ISRAELIS TO CHOOSE A CARGO FROM A NON-CONTROVERSIAL DESTINATION. HE REQUESTED THAT WE URGENTLY CONTACT THE ISRAELIS TO TELL THEM (A) ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR AN ISRAELI CARGO TO TRANSIT THE CANAL AS OF OCTOBER 22, BUT (B) THAT THEY SHOULD APPRECIATE THE PROBLEM POSED BY SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN OF THE CEMENT AND SUBSTITUTE SOME OTHER CARGO OR ANOTHER VESSEL EVEN IF THIS MEANS A TWO OR THREE DAY DELAY. AS INDICATED ABOVE, HE IS WORRIED THAT THE AUTHORITIES -- THOUGH INSTRUCTED TO PERMIT ISRAELI CARGO THROUGH -- WILL FEEL BOUND TO ACT AGAINST SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN CARGO AND IS UNWILLING TO STICK HIS NECK OUT BY APPEARING TO BE EVADING UN/OAU EMBARGO REGULATIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA. HE ASKED FOR A FLASH ANSWER TO HIS SUGGESTION.

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4. MEANWHILE, AT HIS REQUEST I GAVE THE SHIP DATA CITED REFTEL TO HIS CHEF DE CABINET, OSAMA AL BAZ, FOR HIS INFORMATION.

5. COMMENT: IT APPEARS MOST SHORTSIGHTED THAT THE ISRAELIS SHOULD CHOOSE A SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGIN CARGO FOR THE TEST RUN. IF IT SOMEHOW

GOES THROUGH, AND WORD OF IT GETS OUT, SADAT
WILL BE DOUBLY EMBARRASSED. IF THE EGYPTIANS
SEIZE IT BECAUSE OF ITS SOUTH AFRICAN ORIGINS,
THE ISRAELIS WILL SCREAM THAT GOE HAS RENEGED.
IT WOULD SEEM REASONABLE TO TAE THIS UP WITH
THE ISRAELIS AND URGE STRONGLY THAT THEY CHOOSE
A CARGO WHICH DOES NOT COMPOUND THE UNFAVORABLE
PUBLICITY SADT IS ALREADY BOUND RECEIVE AS A
RESULT OF PERMITTING AN ISRAELI CARGO TO GO THROUGH.

6. SUGGEST THIS MESSAGE BE PASSED TO THE SECRETARY
AND TEL AVIV WITH REQUEST FOR FLASH REPLY. TIME
IS RUNNING SHORT.

EILTS
UNQUOTE
INGERSOLL

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